

C. H. S.

# BANDWAGON

1954, Vol. 1—JANUARY

25c

## TO THE MEMBERS OF THE "CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY"

This is the 4th time that I have written to thank you for your confidence in me to elect me as your president.

I was also pleased that Bill Green was again -reelected as Vice-President. I had the pleasure of meeting Bill for the first time at the C. F. A. Convention here at Wichita, and I found him to be heart and soul with our organization, and I know too that "The Historical Society" will be well taken care of by that wonderful team of Bob and Agnes King.

I will set the place and the time of the Convention as soon as possible.

Judging from Circus gossip there will be three new shows on the road so let's hope that we all have dry lots and at least one circus for each of us.

Wishing you all a Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

BETTE LEONARD

— The Circusiana Magazine —

# CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Founded in 1939

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## The Editor Says

By now the members of the Circus Historical Society have been notified of the results of the recent Biennial Election.

For those of our readers who are not members, we are privileged to announce the following officers:

Bette Leonard-----President

William "Bill" Green---V.-Pres.

Robert C. King---Sec'y. & Treas.

Agnes W. King  
-----Editor of the Bandwagon

As you see we are retaining the same officers, and as a result of a recent amendment we have combined the offices of secretary and treasurer. This I am sure will lead to more efficient operation of the organization.

Remember that the dues are now \$3.60 a year and will be prorated at 30c per month until May 1, 1954. After that all dues will become due May 1st each year.

Please make all checks for dues, subscriptions and advertising payable to the Circus Historical Society and mail them to Robert C. King, Treasurer, P. O. Box 235, Richmond, Indiana.

Bob joins me in thanking all of you for your vote of confidence.

# Agrippa Martin

## The Man Who Trained the Treacherous Hannibal

By JOHN C. KUNZOG

Seventeen miles west of Erie, Pa., lies the sleepy little borough of Girard with a population of 2,000. A toy factory is the only manufacturing plant, so Girard can properly be classified as a rural community.

But nearly a century ago the village was renowned throughout the States as a "show town" for it was here that Dan Rice made his winter quarters. Here, too, were the winter quarters of other shows: Thayer & Noyes, Rice & Forepaugh, G. R. Spalding & Co., Anderson & Co., and Warner, Springer & Henderson, and others.

With the exception of the latter concern, these shows were so interlocked that with the Rice debacle of 1875 each one of the shows were effected. Forepaugh and Spalding deserted the town and the star of Girard lost its brilliancy.

The Warner, Spring & Henderson show was not financially affiliated with Dan Rice, although the show was started by Dan Rice's first wife following their divorce. She married Charles Warner, business manager for Dan Rice for many years, and the show capitalized on the Rice name by being advertised as "Mrs. Dan Rice's Show." This helped perpetuate the story that Dan Rice was dead; a story first circulated along the Mississippi River after Rice became a victim of yellow fever.

The writer had the privilege of talking, some years ago, to four parties who had trouped with the Dan Rice show, but Girard borough contributes little of circus lore to the collector of circusiana. Few of the landmarks known by show folks are standing. The first Girard home of Dan Rice has been converted to the American Legion quarters; the pretentious mansion built by Rice has been razed, and so have the Rice barns and training stables. Only one building remains standing besides the Legion quarters that has circus background—the Battles barn on Walnut Street where horses and elephants of the Thayer & Noyes show were quartered, and later housing the elephants and horses of the Warner outfit. The barn was originally built for circus animals, the basement barn being used for the elephants, whose weight and trampling would wreck the framework of any structure.

In the Girard cemetery, on the headstones, may be found the names of departed show folk who once trouped with the various circuses wintering in this northern Pennsylvania village.

And it is in this cemetery that may be seen a stone reading "A. D. Martin, 1810-1896." It marks the grave of Agrippa D. Martin, one of the foremost animal trainers of his day. If any of the Band-wagon readers think that the name "Agrippa" is an odd one, it is only fair to enlighten them that it is a medical term denoting an infant born feet foremost, which was the manner of birth of the character of this sketch. He was born in New York state in 1810

and when eight years old his parents moved to Girard, Pa. The father was a farmer, and "Grip," as the lad was familiarly called, was brought up behind the plow. He weighed only 100 pounds when 18 years old, yet he had such a masterly way with animals that he could do more with oxen and horses with a word than most men could accomplish with a whip. Grip loved all animals and living creatures and in a corner of the barn he had many wild animals he trapped, and these he proceeded to teach tricks.

While still in his 'teens he was driving a stage for Col. Reed, of Erie, Pa., on the line running from Erie to Conneaut, Ohio. His masterful way with horses attracted attention and when he was 22 he became a professional horse trainer, later joining the famous Raymond, Ogden & Waring Caravan, one of the first all-animal shows in the United States.

From horses it was but natural that Mr. Martin should train other animals and he was with the caravan but a few months when he was exhibiting lions and tigers. He was absolutely fearless, and the tricks he made the big cats perform were regarded as wonderful. Old-timers had stated that a greater animal trainer never lived and that Grip performed feats with wild beasts that no modern trainer has ever attempted.

It was Grip Martin who first gave to the circus going public undreamed of feats with elephants. One of his performing pachyderms was the famous bull elephant, Hannibal, which had a reputation of being a man-killer. Yet under Martin the treacherous and ponderous Hannibal performed docilely and willingly. Martin was the only animal trainer in the world who taught these big beasts to throw him into the air and catch him on their tusks, a trick that delighted Hannibal, who would wind his trunk around the Martin and toss him high into the air and then catch the lithe trainer safely on the great tusks. It was an act that held the spectators awe-bound; men would bite in two the cigars they were smoking; women stuffed handkerchiefs in their mouths to stifle any cry, while young girls would chew on the sleeves of their dresses. Not a sound was to be heard while Martin had the great Hannibal go through his act, but when Martin was safely deposited on the ground by the giant elephant, the ovation accorded him was thunderous.

Martin trouped with many of the old-time wagon shows. He was with Dan Rice many seasons, and also traveled with Van Amburgh, as well as others. While Grip had scores of narrow escapes, and his body was covered with scars as the results of his fights when putting the cats through their paces, he never sustained serious injuries.

When he retired from the circus business it was to be a hotel keeper at Girard, and it was he who built the famous old Martin House which for many years was a rendezvous for circusmen and sportsmen. The hostelry was known far and wide for its wonderful cuisine.

He finally gave up the hotel and retired to his farm on Depot Road. He died in 1896, aged 86 years. The Martin homestead is now known as the Elmwood Home, a haven for aged folk.

Martin's daughter, Nellie, married Charles Noyes, an employe of Dan Rice and later part owner of the Thayer & Noyes Circus. She was famous in her day as one of the most daring and skillful horse-women in America.

Bandwagon readers who delve into circus history have no doubt read how, in 1853, Dan Rice's show floated down the Erie and Beaver Canal to Girard, a village that so intrigued Rice that he purchased property and made it his winter quarters for many years. My supposition is, that young Martin, an employe of Rice, extolled the beauties of Girard to Rice, easily accessible by waterways to any point, and it was at the behest of Martin that Rice made it his home, following his trouble with Spalding who seized Rice's property in New York State.

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## Charlie Duble Visits Clyde Beatty

From Charles E. Duble, Associate Editor, Bandwagon

I attended both matinee performances of the Clyde Beatty Circus in Louisville September 7th and 8th, 1953. A high class circus in every respect and the well balanced program presented in the three rings and arena pleased everyone. From the amount of applause it appeared that the George Hanneford troupe 4-people riding act was the big hit of the show. Costumes of all performers bright and clean. It goes without saying, the Beatty show is all real circus, and not forgetting Vic. Robbins band and good circus music.

Show makes a good appearance on the lot with 4-pole big top, 5-pole menagerie, and a good side show is also to be seen under management of Arthur Hoffman. My good friend "Whitey" Gibson, former front door man with Gentry Bros.; Hagenbeck-Wallace, and other shows was along with me and we left the lot feeling well satisfied that we enjoyed another pleasant circus day. Guy Warren, musician with Cole Bros. five seasons, and Lockwood Lewis, former side show leader with same show, also took in the show.

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We are sorry to report that Charles Gerlach, one of our honorary members is very ill. Joe Tracy reports that he is in a hospital at Gowanda, New York. Charlie is 84 years old.

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Charlie Campbell, one of our first members is again a member of C. H. S. Welcome back, Charlie.

# 1953 MIDIAN SHRINE CIRCUS

## Wichita, Kansas---November, 1953

PRODUCED AND STAGED BY ORRIN DAVENPORT  
EQUESTRIAN DIRECTOR EARL SHIPLEY  
NORMAN CARROLL, "Golden Voiced," Announcer  
JACK CERVONE, Band Director

Program as follows:

	Terrell Jacobs Kayletta, High Act	
The Zoppes Unsupported ladders	Johnnie Laddie Ladders	
	Clowns	
	Helen Hagg's Chimpanzees	
	Portis Sims, Pony Drill	
	Clowns	
Joandies—Juggling on the wire (this is an outstanding act)		
Aerial Display — Miss Grace, Elly Ardely, Corrine		
	Clowns	
Smetona, Perch	The Olveras, Perch	Franscisco-Delores, Perch
	Miller Bros. Liberty Horses	
	Clowns	
Cilly Fiends	Dressage act, Lipizzaner Pasha	
	Hippo Walk around	
Marjorie Cordell	The Kentons	Kayletta
The Hodginis	Portis Sims	Andens Dogs
Dogs and Ponies	Dogs and Ponies	
	The Tokayers—Teeterboard Acrobatic Act	
	The Zavatta Family—Riding Act	
	Clowns	
Al G. Kelly Bros. Circus Elephants trained and presented by		
	Shirley and Freddie Logan	
	Clowns	
	The Sensational Kays—High Wire Number	

\* \* \*

Clowns—Bozo Harrell, Joe Geiger, Bill Bentledge, Hopp Green, Gene Warke, Toy Thomas, Cecil Eddington.

Visitors were: Mr. and Mrs. Howard Suez, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Stevens, D. R. Miller, and Bill Woodcock, "Dad" White, Conley Riding act, Jane Meridith.

Thursday night a reunion party was held back stage by the ladies. Guests were: Hattire Shipley, Mitzie Fein, Mrs. Marks, Bette Leonard, Grace McIntosh, Elly Ardely, Corrine de Aro, Smethona Anita Olveras, Delorous, Marjorie Cordell, Miss Kenton, Shirley Logan, Miss Kay.

\* \* \*

"Dad" White suffered a sprained ankle and was hospitalized for a few days after his return to Fredonia.

# An Australian Circus Closes

Letter from Sid Baker, C.H.S. Member

5/32 Park Road,  
Paddington, N. S. W. Australia,  
Sept. 17, 1953

The Bandwagon

Dear Editor:

I regret to inform you of the passing of Silvers Circus of Australia. This circus was born some seven years ago and rose to fame very rapidly.

The proprietor, Mr. Mervyn King, was, in his heyday, one of Australia's best acrobats. Other than that he became a good all rounder—horseman, wild animal man, tent man and a good business man. But unfortunately, as is the way of this wicked old world, bad health was his portion and he was compelled to take a rest.

Mervyn and I worked together for many years in other circuses and as a friendly gesture he invited me to spend my annual vacation as his guest on Silvers Circus. I gladly took advantage of the offer and spent three weeks every December with his show. Despite the fact that I've been a circus man for the greater part of my life I still love the circus. I like the sight of a circus tent by night, the gleam of light coming from the inside, the festoon lights on the outside. I like the noise and clutter of the pull down and the quiet talk of the caravan folk just before the final good night. I like the hustle of the morning get away and the scenes of meadow and farm, of mountains and streams, of rivers and oceans that are passed enroute to the next town. I like to watch the big top go up and the activities and preparations for the next performance. And more than all I like to see the crowds roll up in large numbers ready and eager to buy the only things we have to sell—tickets.

And so, (to quote a famous movie man) we reluctantly say farewell to Silvers Circus. The show is ended but the memory lingers on.

(Signed) SID BAKER

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## NEW DIRECTORS

Director for No. 2 Division—Fulton W. White, 1249 Forest Ave., Portland, Maine.

Directors elected for Division No. 5—Bill Kasiska, Baraboo, Wisc. Herman Linden, Aurora, Illinois.

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We are glad to report that Mrs. Clyde Wixom who was injured in an auto accident in West Branch, Michigan, on December 2, is recovering and is at her home in Detroit, Michigan.

October 21st, 1953

9 Raymead Ave.,  
Thornton, England  
Surrey, England

Dear Mrs. King:

I thank you for sending me the issues of "the Bandwagon," for I certainly enjoy reading them. I have learned much about American circuses in its pages and, in fact, I honestly believe I know more about American circuses than British! I have just finished reading Fred Bradna's book "Big Top" and this, too, gave me much pleasure; the best factual book I have yet read on circuses anywhere.

For many months now I have been unable to work because of a complaint to my spine, and I am waiting to go into a London hospital, after having been in one at Chertsey, Surrey, for a month. This time I am hoping the doctors will be able to put me on the road to recovery.

So for the present I send all C. H. S. members best wishes and happy circus hunting.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) EDDIE HAWTHORNE (C. H. S. 225)

P. S. I am enclosing some extracts from a letter I received from Mr. Fred E. Coope, who has since passed away. He was for many years in charge of rail transport for the Bertram Mills Circus I thought perhaps you may possibly like to publish them someday. E. H.

\* \* \*

**(Extracts from letter by Fred E. Coope, 1947)**

Dear Mr. Hawthorne:

I am pleased to help you with information about transporting Circuses by Rail, as that was my job for many happy years and have handled all the Big Shows during that time. I organized the Bertram Mills Circus transport by Rail when first they started tenting.

Yes, the Mills Circus is the only one in this country to use Rail, but the smaller Shows sometimes send their elephants by Rail, if walking distance is too far.

Mills have no Railway vehicles of their own and to make up their three Special trains, each of the Four Group Railways contribute to the required Rolling Stock, such as Horse Box Vans, Flat Trucks, etc., for Trailers and Wagons, and these vehicles are allocated to the Circus throughout the Tenting Season, and for which the Railway companies make no special charge. After the Tour is over the Trains return to Mills Headquarters at Ascot and are then returned to the owning companies. This saves the Rail Co's having to provide fresh sets of trucks each move and works well for all parties.

First Train loaded with wagons that are not wanted on location after morning of closing day—first vehicle holds tractor and wagon which on arrival is pulled off by the Tractor—latter then pulls all the loads off. This train should reach next town by about 1 A.M. and be promptly unloaded to make room for the Second train as this contains the Canvas and Poles, except center poles of which Mills

uses double sets, one going ahead and ready for the Circus to at once build up on arrival. On leaving a Town they bring that set of Center Poles on Second Train and this goes forward to next town during the week. This train is due at about 2:30 A.M.

Third train is booked to leave so as to reach the next town by 11 A.M., the animals remain in the Train all night. If they arrive earlier there would be no Horse Tents erected, as they are on Second train, hence being warm and dry all night on Rail.

Our rail curves would not take the long trucks used in the U.S.A. The Flat Trucks just hold two wagons which are shackled to each side for safety.

No ramps are used as at each town the Rail Company have usually a Head on Dock where the train can put in for quick unloading—the Tractors run over buffer ends for which purpose loading Plates are used to cover the gap between vehicles.

Years ago I advocated to the London Midland Scottish Railway Co., the use of a Portable Ramp to be loaded, say, on the first train, but the Company was not interested, seeing we were managing comfortably in the Good Yards under personal supervision.

Some of the Acts travel with their gear on the Horse train, but a number use their own cars and tow their trailers by road.

I have had a lot to do with the Transport of Mills Circus. They are a delightful people to serve and know just what they want and WHY—this latter helped me a lot.

My best wishes always.

Yours fraternally,

(Signed) FRED E. COOPE

## EDDIE HAWTHORNE

34 Linden Road,  
Bognor Regis,  
Sussex, England  
Dec. 16, 1953

Mr. R. C. King  
Richmond, Indiana

Dear Sir:

I received a voting paper from you this morning to my husband, Edmund Hawthorne. I am sorry to inform you that he died suddenly in St. George's Hospital on the 27th of November. It has been such a shock to me. I have closed my home for the time being and at present staying with my sister at the above address. Would you kindly let all the members know by your Bandwagon magazine. He had been so keen a fan that his mail will take me some time to deal with. In spite of my sadness I wish you all a happy Christmas.

Yours sincerely,

FLORA HAWTHORNE

# Circus Lore Is Her Hobby

Reprinted from Houston Texas Chronicle, Oct. 23, 1953

A dinner party at the Fred Stancliff house, 1911 North Boulevard, might include such notables as "Blinko" the clown from Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey, "Unus," who does a one-finger stand atop a lighted glove on a 10-foot platform, or the LaVal troupe of flying trapeze artists.

Mrs. Stancliff, a member of Circus Historical Society and Circus Fans of America, both national organizations for incurable circus lovers, plays a Neat (white faced) clown on occasions and has ambitions of playing a calliope and riding an elephant.

Wife of a Houston insurance man who is also a Shriner, Mrs. Stancliff was writing a novel with a setting in India, when the chairman of Shrine Circus happened into her husband's office. He requested "something different" for a circus program and Mr. Stancliff left the project to his wife.

"I thought looking up circus lore would be something like writing a college theme," said pert Mrs. Stancliff. "My original idea was to intersperse circus history in short articles throughout the program. The subject was so absorbing that it meant a change of hobbies and way of life," she said.

Quoting her son, Fred, Jr., a junior at the Rice Institute, Mrs. Stancliff says he once commented that "he wouldn't take a million dollars for her, wouldn't give 15 cents for another model and she could get the family into the darnedest situations!"

These situations seem to be spending vacations visiting traveling circuses, collecting good-luck elephant hairs and tracking down some of the 1000 descendants of original Siamese Twins.

In dealing with circuses Mrs. Stancliff has picked up bits of trivia few people know outside the ring. The circus, for instance, Mrs. Stancliff says, started in America shortly after the Revolutionary War. George Washington attended one of the original shows, a small one-ring Ricketts circus.

"The big cats, lions and tigers, are animal world elite," states Mrs. Stancliff. "Elephants are prima donnas, thin skinned, and must be shaved twice a year with a blow torch. Their long black bristle hairs stick performers."

Chimpanzees are least trustworthy, she said, adding that once one threw a two-by-four at her in St. Louis during a police circus.

Mr. and Mrs. Stancliff met at a masked Hallowe'en party when she was a high school senior and he a Rice Institute sophomore and track star. She said that he didn't see what she looked like until a date the next Saturday night. They were married five years later after her graduation from Rice.

"One evening I thought he was going to propose," she laughed. "Instead I got a lecture on merits of higher education. He wouldn't marry me until I received a college degree."

In 1952 Mrs. Stancliff, formerly Florence Powers, attended the University of Missouri for a summer course in journalism. Week

enas she visited Tom Packs Circus in Southern Illinois. She says that there is hardly a circus in the United States where she can't walk in and find a friend.

A native Houstonian and granddaughter of a civil engineer who helped map out the early city, Mrs. Stancliff was active in cub scout work while her son was growing up. At one time she was Den Mother and during World War II, when men were scarce, she acted as Mrs. Cub Master of Pack 25 for 100 boys.

Always a writing enthusiast, Mrs. Stancliff put away her novel of India while Fred, Jr., was growing up and it has never been completed. She concentrated on children's plays and wrote innumerable Indian, Christmas and circus school programs. She was also P.-T. A. secretary for Poe and Sidney Lanier Schools.

Mrs. Stancliff's first appearance as Neat clown was taken on a dare. Costume belonged to a member of Arabia Temple who performs each year at Shrine Circus. Since then she has costumed herself for several private parties as well as for the circus. She says that technique of clowning is intricate, and to walk with 18-inch flop shoes she copied an elephant's side-to-side-shifting gait.

Besides circus organizations Mrs. Stancliff is a member of Scribblers, Tuesday Musical Club, College Women's Club, Daughters of the Nile and at one time belonged to eight different literary clubs and four bridge groups. She is active in Rice Alumnae affairs and at present is engaged in writing nonfiction circus articles.

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#### MOTHER OF CIRCUS BAND LEADER DIES

Columbus, Kas., Jan. 8. (AP)—Mrs. Sarah Elisabeth Evans, 88, mother of Merle Evans, band director for Ringling Bros-Barnum-Bailey Circus, died in Columbus City Hospital late yesterday.

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Tom MacInnes reports that his father, Jim MacInnes, is very much improved. In December he started back to work (part-time).

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Our dear friend, George Chindahl of Maitland, Florida, has been ill since December 5th with a heart attack. His daughter reports that he is making a good recovery.

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The Melvin Olsens of Indianapolis, Indiana, Jack LaPearl and the Robert Kings of Richmond, have been keeping Route 40 between Indianapolis and Richmond, busy the past few weeks.

Included in the festivities was a "Bang-up" New Year's Eve House party, in Richmond and an indoor circus sponsored by the Knights of Calumbus in Indianapolis, Jack LaPearl being featured in the latter.

## MICHIGAN'S OLDEST SHOWMAN DIES

(Sent in by F. C. Fisher)

James E. Carter, one of Michigan's oldest showmen passed away at Big Rapids, Michigan, on October 16th, age 75 years.

Jim as he was known by everyone who knew him was a real trouper and a true friend regardless of weather or financial conditions. He was always ready to do his best that the show might go on. He was a versatile performer and musician, being able to play any part, either Comedy or Straight and could play any musical instrument including piano and calliope.

In the late nineties he organized a Dramatic Show under canvas and travelled by wagon in the early part of 1902. The show had grown and a railroad car was purchased. The performances now presented were "Uncle Toms Cabin" and "Ten Nights in a Bar Room."

At the outbreak of the First World War, the show was sold and he joined the Side Show Band of Ringling Bros. This was the first and only time that they had an all white band in the Side Show, which was then under the direction of the late "Lew Graham."

At the termination of his contract with the Ringling Show, Jim again engaged in the operation of his own show which this time went out on trucks playing halls in the winter and canvas in the summer, travelling through Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Ohio.

During the late 1920's Jim and his family travelled with various shows and circuses, some of which were Adkins Dog and Pony Show, Tiger Bills Wild West Show (then owned by the late "Col. Emmet Snyder"), Lewis Bros. Circus and Fisher Bros. Circus.

From 1948 until a few weeks before his death, Jim was again active in the operation of his own show.

During World War II, he purchased a home and established a Winter quarters at Morley, Michigan, where his wife and son now reside.

Jim will be missed by all who knew him.

## MILLS BROS. ROUTE BOOK

1953 EDITION --- \$1.00

FRED W. STAFFORD

17 Barbara Road      BRISTOL, CONN.

# The Sipe Educated Animal & Lilliputian Show

Written for The Bandwagon by Charles E. Duble, Associate Editor

One day, the summer of 1904, the Geo. W. Sipe Educated Animal & Lilliputian Show played Louisville, Ky. I saw the parade of carved and gilt band wagons, tableau wagons, and cages which were mostly all small size, hence the name "Lilliputian" Show. There was a distinct rumble to those gaudy circus wagons as they rolled along behind clattering hooves of sleek spotted ponies. Several mounted people, mostly young, in spangled costumes were in line and the calliope of course drawn by 10 or 12 more ponies brought up the rear, to the strains of some popular tunes of the day. The parade equipment of this show was built by the well known firm Sullivan & Eagle, Peru, Ind., builders of the elaborate circus wagons for many years. I saw the night performance, and many well trained ponies, dogs, and monkeys were put through the various routines by competent trainers. A family of four appeared on the elevated stage riding bicycles of various types while doing their gymnastic stunts. This is an act that has entirely disappeared from the circus programs of today. There was a four pole big top, while the menagerie tent contained the ponies, dogs, the small parade wagons, and perhaps some other small animals. I do not recall the show having elephants nor a side show.

I have gathered a few authentic notes that may be of interest to circus fans, the majority whom I know never heard of the Sipe Show. Taylor Coons, who was the first general agent of Gentry Bros. Shows, of Bloomington, Ind., went to Kokomo, Ind., where the **Sipe, Dolman & Blake**, Dog & Pony Show was just being organized. He perhaps filled that position for a short time with the new show then returned to Gentry Bros. An item in The New York Clipper at the time named the owners as Geo. W. Sipe, E. A. Dolman, and R. J. Blake. A June, 1897, issue of The Clipper stated the show had opened the season April 14, in Kokomo, the show having 50 ponies, 100 dogs, and 25 monkeys. Geo. W. Sipe, business manager, E. A. Dolman, treasurer, Dan Robinson, general agent. The show moved on one 70-foot flat car and two 60-foot sleeping, dining, and baggage cars. The Clipper of April 9, 1898, carried an advertisement of the show for musicians, the name then, Sipe & Blake's Dog & Pony Show. The band leader was Tom Ogden. The Clipper of June 8, 1901, published the roster of Advertising Car No. 1 of Sipe's Educated Animal & Lilliputian Show. The route of the show was given in the Clipper of June 22, 1901.

The Clipper of December 13, 1902, stated, Prof. R. J. Blake's Dog, Pony & Monkey Circus after a good season of 22 weeks with the Bostock-Ferari carnival had closed at Lafayette, Ind. This show used a 76-foot baggage car. The Clipper of June 11, 1904, mentioned the Sipe, Educated Animal & Lilliputian Show.

## SIPE GOES ON BLOCK

The following advertisement was published in three issues of the New York Clipper, the fall of 1908. Public Auction Of The SIPE SHOWS at Kokomo, Ind. 147 head of Shetland ponies, of which 70 are ring stock, presenting a 70 pony pyramid act, two drills of 16 ponies each, one set of ponies that dance a quadrille, manage act ponies, high diving pony, rope-jumping ponies, waltzing ponies, leap-frog ponies, hind-leg ponies, talking ponies, and pick out ponies. 60 dogs, 80 sets of pony harness, 20 pony saddles, 10 baggage wagons, 2 elaborate band wagons, 40 miniature cages, chariots, and parade wagons; 1 ticket wagon; 2 sixty foot Pullman coaches; two 60-foot baggage cars; one 50-foot coach converted into sleeper; 20 educated monkeys, also oscelots, lemurs, argatos, ant-eaters, dwarf kangaroos, armadillos, badgers, wild cats, 20 cockatoos, and parrots, one 14-foot python and one side show outfit. Also listed was the lot of tents, big show canvas down to smaller tents and size of each given. Also the entire lot of lighting equipment which were all gasoline lights used by the shows of that day. As to the outcome of this sale I have no information.

The Sipe title was never used later and it recalls the period when many circuses and wild west shows were touring the country. The grassy lots, the billowing white tents, (not colored canvas like some shows of the present), the blended odor of sawdust, peanuts and lemons, the natural voice of the side show talker calling attention to the line of banners with the old familiar words, "All these strange people and curiosities to be seen for 10 cents; you have plenty of time before the big show starts." These are memories we all hold dear. The fat lady, the sword swallower, the snake enchantress, the fire eater or human salamander, the old London Punch & Judy, the magician, and not forgetting the Ragtime band and Jubilee minstrels amid the exciting strains of "Peaceful Henry;" "St. Louis Tickle;" or "Noisy Bill," a few popular tunes with side show bands of that day. As the side show banners waved in the breeze some of the figures of the strange people painted on same appeared to really be lifelike.

The spotted ponies with brass studded harness and their waving colored plumes and those small elaborate parade wagons in their gilt and glamour as they rumbled along brought thrills to thousands on circus day when the Sipe Show came to town. Like many other circuses and tent shows of those times, that have come and gone, the Geo. W. Sipe show today is but a memory.

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## BANDWAGON AD PAYS OFF

A new member of CHS, Willie Ingram, Codell, Kansas, writes that his ad in a late issue of Bandwagon has him busy filling orders, and is now sending out lists to over 500 circus fans, and one party bought 364 old issues of The Billboard from him.

Mr. Ingram buys and sells all printed matter regarding circuses. He is also a member of CFA.

## **LETTER FROM TROY SCRUGGS, C. H. S. No. 526**

(Mr. Scruggs is with the Royal American Shows)

September 30, 1953

"On September 8th, 1953, my daughter and myself drove to Lancaster, Missouri, and I visited the William Hall farm. Took some nice pictures of the two cage wagons still there and also of the old coach Hall used for an office and one of the big barns still there.

On September 13th, Jim McRobert, John Theile and myself drove to Washington, Kansas, and had a swell time with Bill Green. Later in the day we drove to Manhattan, Kansas, and visited with Jack Mills and his swell bunch of show folks. September 15th, Mills was in Topeka, Kansas, and Mrs. Scruggs and our two girls along with Mr. and Mrs. Thiele of Topeka were guests of Jack's at the night show. They report a swell show. Hope to see the show again when they play Tampa, Florida (our home) in November.

In Joplin, Missouri, I had a nice visit with Paul Van Pool who gave me all the low down on things in Wichita. Mr. Foy Cooke came out and visited on the last night of our stay in Joplin."

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## **JAKE GETS AROUND**

Jake Posey writes:

"The Pacific Coast Showmen's Association, held an old timers meeting recently. There were several hundred present, but only four circus men, and I was the oldest member.

"The Long Beach, California, Municipal Band has several old circus musicians in it. The Band gave a concert on November 5th dedicated to me. They played all circus music. The concert was broadcast over the radio. It gave me a very nice introduction.

"There is a park close by. It has a wonderful collection of old horse drawn vehicles. Among the collection was an old omnibus like the one I was driving in Cincinnati, and left to join the Van Amburgh Circus—seventy-three years ago."

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## **NEW MEMBER**

Edward Francis Tracy, Jr.,  
No. 549  
1653 West Main Road,  
Middletown, R. I.

Robert A. Reed, No. 550  
148 14th Street N.,  
Lethbridge, Alta, Canada.

Stephen E. Le Page, No. 551  
Shenks Lane,  
Millersville, Pa.

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## **IN THE SERVICE**

David Jackson  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**NATIONAL CIRCUS WEEK**

**JUNE 1-7, 1954**



BETTE LEONARD  
America's No. 1 Circus Fan